

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 278974

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 8548 ACTION SECSTATE INFO SECDEF DA
29 NOV

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8548

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, GR, IT

SUBJ: GOG DESIRE TO PURCHASE BELL HELICOPTERS FROM
UNITED STATES RATHER THAN FROM ITALY

REF: CJUSMAGG 081550Z NOV 74 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GOG DESIRES TO PURCHASE UH1H AND OH 58
HELICOPTERS FROM BELL RATHER THAN BELL-AGUSTA, CITING
INTER ALIA EXCESSIVE COST AND LENGTHY DELIVERY TIME FROM
LATTER. SPECTER OF FRENCH FOOTHOLD IN LOCAL HELICOPTER
MARKET RAISED BY LOCAL BELL REP IF RESPONSE TO PENDING
REQUEST FROM DEPUTY MOD NOT RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 15.
ALTHOUGH FMS CREDITS WOULD BE WELCOMED, WILLINGNESS OF
GOG TO ARRANGE OWN CREDIT REPORTED. END SUMMARY.

2. MG CONDOURIS, HAF (RET.), LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE
FOR BELL, GENERALY DYNAMICS AND OTHER US AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY
FIRMS, CAME TO EMBASSY NOVEMBER 27 TO SOLICIT EMBASSY
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SUPPORT FOR REQUEST SUBMITTED TO JUSMAGG NOVEMBER 2 BY

DEPUTY MOD KATSADENAS AND CONVEYED IN REFTEL (NOT SENT TO DEPARTMENT), THAT GREECE BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE 43 UH1H AND 33 OH 58 HELICOPTERS DIRECTLY FROM BELL RATHER THAN FROM AGUSTA-BELL, WHICH IS EXCLUSIVE LICENSEE FOR SALE OF THESE KINDS OF HELICOPTERS IN GREECE. RATIONALE FOR THIS REQUEST, AS EARLIER PROVIDED TO JUSMAGG BY HAC IN SEPTEMBER 25 LETTER AS WELL AS BY DEPUTY MOD IN NOVEMBER 2 LETTER, INCLUDED "VERY HIGH UNIT PRICE AND UNACCEPTABLY LONG DELIVERY TIME" FROM AGUSTA-BELL. IN REFTEL, JUSMAGG NOTES THAT SUPPORTABILITY THROUGH US MILSTRIP PROCEDURES OF HELICOPTERS ACQUIRED FROM UNITED STATES AND OTHER IMPORTANT TECHNICAL/MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS ARGUE IN FAVOR OF ALLOWING GOG TO PURCHASE DIRECTLY FROM BELL OF USA.

3. CONDOURIS, WHO WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY, POINZED OUT THAT AGUSTA-BELL DELIVERY TIME WAS THREE YEARS WHEREAS HE BELIEVED GREECE MIGHT OBTAIN AT LEAST PART OF ITS REQUIREMENT FROM BELL IN 8 TO 10 MONTHS, IF NOT SOONER. GREECE WISHED TO ACQUIRE HELICOPTERS BY SUMMER 1975, AND CONDOURIS BELIEVED BELL, WITH COOPERATION OF US ARMY, COULD DELIVER SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF GREEK REQUIREMENT FROM 200 HELICOPTERS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT FORT WORTH. HE ALSO NOTED TIME URGENCY HAC REPORTEDLY FELT FOR GETTING RESPONSE TO PENDING REQUEST, CITING DECEMBER 15 AS DEADLINE. (WE HAVE RECEIVED NO DIRECT INDICATION OF SUCH DEADLINE FROM GOG.) HE SUGGESTED THAT IF RESPONSE NOT RECEIVED BY THAT DATE, HAC WOULD TURN TO FRENCH, WHO ARE PRESSING ON THIS FRONT AS IN SO MANY AREAS OF MILITARY SUPPLY. HE BELIEVED FRENCH CREDIT TERMS, REPORTEDLY 8 PER CENT FIVE YEAR CREDIT, WERE ATTRACTIVE TO GOG, AND DELIVERY TIME PRESUMABLY BETTER THAN AGUSTA-BELL.

4. IN ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY CONDOURIS STATEMENT THAT GOG WISHED TO PURCHASE HELICOPTERS THROUGH FMS CASE, EMBOFFS ASKED IF THIS IMPLIED GOG EXPECTATION OF FMS CREDIT FOR PURCHASE. CONDOURIS, WHO OBVIOUSLY WAS NOT SPEAKING FOR GOG BUT WELL-INFORMED ON MATTER, REPLIED THAT HIS UNDERSTANDING WAS GOG INTENDED TO ARRANGE OWN CREDIT, ALTHOUGH FMS CREDITS OBVIOUSLY WOULD BE WELCOMED IF AVAILABLE.

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5. WE HAVE POINTED OUT IN CONNECTION WITH OTHER, RECENT GREEK ARMS SUPPLY SITUATIONS THAT OUR INTERESTS ARE WELL-SERVED BY BEING FORTHCOMING IN MEETING GOG REQUESTS FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. IT IS EQUALLY TRUE WITH RESPECT TO HELICOPTER PURCHASE REQUEST AND WE URGE DEPT. AND DOD TO APPROVE PENDING GOG REQUEST AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE.

KUBIQH UNQUOTE SISCO

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